

NOTES FROM THE AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM.

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW APHANIPTEROUS INSECT
FROM NEW SOUTH WALES.

BY A. SIDNEY OLLIFF, F.E.S.,
ASSISTANT ZOOLOGIST, AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM.

The remarkable parasite characterized below was found in large numbers on a Porcupine Ant Eater (*Echidna hystrix*), which was recently added to the collection of the Australian Museum. It chiefly affects the breast and head of the *Echidna*—especially near the throat and in the neighbourhood of the ears—attaching itself so firmly by its rostrum as to render its removal a matter of considerable difficulty. Unlike the common *Pulex irritans* and most of its congeners this species does not appear to possess the power of jumping. Specimens which I removed from their host and kept alive for some days gave no evidence of saltatorial habits.

After a careful perusal of the writings of Kolenati, Westwood and others who have treated of the genera of the order Aphaniptera, I have arrived at the conclusion that this new parasite cannot be placed in any existing genus. I therefore propose to name it *Echidnophaga*. In form it is more rounded than most of its allies and its body is much less spined. The mandibles are long and only serrate at the apical half, the fourth tarsal joint of the two anterior pairs of legs is very small, and the apical joint of the labial palpi is longer than the other joints taken together—a character in itself sufficient to distinguish *Echidnophaga* from *Pulex* and *Ceratopsyllus*.

Family. PULICIDÆ.

ECHIDNOPHAGA, gen. nov.

Body globose, membranaceous, almost destitute of bristles, except at the anus.

Antennæ capitate, four jointed.

Head moderately large; mandibles about half as long as the entire insect, not very broad, finely serrate on the outer margins at the apical half; lingua elongate, very fine; maxillæ elongate, triangular, with no appearance of an articulation at the apex; maxillary palpi four jointed, the first and second of about equal length, the third slightly shorter, the fourth a little longer than the first, acuminate at the apex; labium elongate, narrow, slightly constricted before the apex; labial palpi three jointed, the first short, the second considerably larger, the third longer than the two preceding joints taken together, pointed at the extremity.

Legs rather long; the femora somewhat thickened; tibiæ armed with rather large spines on the external margins; tarsi five jointed, claws simple; anterior and intermediate tarsi with the first three joints of nearly equal lengths, the fourth smaller, the fifth longer than the two basal joints together; posterior tarsi with the basal joint much larger than the following ones.

ECHIDNOPHAGA AMBULANS, sp. n.

Broadly ovate, castaneous, shining, with indistinct green reflections. Antennæ capitate, finely setose. Eyes rather prominent, small, pale castaneous. Head moderately convex above, finely and indistinctly crenulate in front. Thorax short. Abdomen ovate, rather strongly convex above, somewhat truncate posteriorly; the anal region armed with a few strong bristles. Legs pale castaneous, tips of the femora and tibiæ darker; tibiæ with two feeble notches on the external margins. Length 2 mm.; greatest width $1\frac{1}{3}$ mm.

New South Wales. A parasite upon *Echidna hystrix*.

This species has little in common with the *Pulex echidnæ* described by Denny (Ann. Mag. Nat. Hist. XII., p. 315, pl. 37, fig. 6, 1843), from the same host.